

# From the Pastor's Desktop

A Message from Father Charles Puthota

April 13, 2025



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

**Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord:** Paul Grant and Marian Palmer sing: "Hey, King! Where's your crown, where's your Cadillac? I've never seen a king before --- on a donkey's back." On Palm Sunday, we commemorate our King's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Jesus' triumphal entry will turn into dark, sad days of excruciating suffering and shameful death. But it will all pale in the resplendent glory that will dawn on Easter. The profound Christian insight is that it's always through the cross that we find our glory. Without suffering, there is no love, no redemption, no new life. Suffering is redemptive. Death is the way to resurrection. Let's look at the face of Christ this Holy Week. Let's look into his tender eyes. Let's place our hand on the heart of Christ. Let's strive to enter his mind and heart and dwell on his thoughts and feelings.

**Archdiocesan Annual Appeal (AAA)---We've Reached the Goal---Congratulations and Thanks!:** Please see the names of donors on the last page of the bulletin. Those who are still considering, please give; the surplus gets returned to our parish for our own parish ministries and services. In the time span of six weeks, we have made the goal of \$36,292. I would like to thank all those who donated generously toward AAA 2025. Also, special thanks to all those who donated 1.4% (\$500 and more) so thoughtfully and kindly, which made it easier for us to reach our goal swiftly. Now that we have completed this goal quickly within six weeks, you shall not hear from me about it again except to thank the donors and celebrate this achievement. I shall be in touch with you about the luncheon, as promised, for those who have donated 1.4% or more as a way of expressing my deep gratitude.

**Holy Week:** St. Elizabeth Parish Holy Week Schedule is in the Mail: I mailed last Monday April 7 to each parishioner of St. Elizabeth Parish my Easter letter with the Holy Week schedule. Please see the schedule also in this weekend's bulletin. I invite you wholeheartedly to participate in the holy rituals and services of the Holy Week at our parish. Please do encourage your family and friends too to join us.

**Lectio Divina (Divine Reading): A Practical Suggestion for the Holy Week:** Can you choose a passion narrative from one of the four gospels? Every gospel, toward the end, has the account of Jesus' suffering and death. You may go to a church or any other calm place or your living room or kitchen. Turn the TV off. Sit quietly. Read slowly and prayerfully the passion narrative and be silent for a few minutes after reading it. It will only take about 20 minutes or so to do this. You will not regret spending some quality time on this simple form of prayer, Lectio Divina. If you feel inspired, speak to Jesus in your words. St. Ignatius of Loyola suggests in the "Spiritual Exercises" to stand before the cross and ask: "Lord, what have I done for you? What am I doing for you? What shall I do for you?"

**Morning Prayer:** During the Holy Week, please do join the Morning Prayer on Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday at 8:30 a.m. Please see the schedule for all the services of the Holy Week.

**Donating Easter Lilies:** If you are able to donate Easter lilies, you are most welcome to do so. Please bring them sooner than later to church during the morning Mass timings (8:00 a.m. through 9:00 a.m) or leave them in the office during office hours (Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m through 12:30 p.m.)

**Good Friday: A Day of Fasting and Abstinence.**

**Pontifical Good Friday Collection:** The offering taken up on Good Friday in all the Catholic parishes around the world is called the Pontifical Good Friday Collection. It goes toward supporting the holy shrines, parishes, and ministries in the Holy Land. It includes the liturgical, ecumenical, communications, educational (Terra Sancta Schools), pastoral, social, & charitable works, all of which in the Holy Land are entrusted to the care of the Franciscans. Christians in the Holy Land rely heavily on the help that comes to them from this worldwide collection. In the context of the war going on now, this collection is all the more urgent. Please donate generously.

**Via Dolorosa:** On my four visits to the Holy Land, one of the important things I did along with the pilgrims I accompanied was walking the sacred route, Via Dolorosa, which in Latin means “the way of suffering”. It’s in the Old City of Jerusalem. Tradition has long held that Jesus walked through this very path toward Calvary. This route winds through narrow streets with hundreds of shops on either side. That is why we had to wake up early in the morning by 4:30 a.m. and get to this place and start the Way of the Cross by 5:30 a.m. so that we could complete the prayers by the time the shops opened. Our Way of the Cross along this holy route ended with Mass at the Church of Holy Sepulcher, my most favorite church in the whole wide world because it is the church of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord.

**Good Friday quote:** “We adore you and we bless you, Lord Jesus Christ, here and in all the churches which are in the whole world, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.” --- St. Francis of Assisi

I wish everyone at St. Elizabeth parish a reflective, prayerful, and grace-filled Holy Week,

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota